AGENDA ITEM III A

PROPOSED NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM

DELGADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE IN VETERINARY TECHNOLOGY

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A proposal for an A.A.S. in Veterinary Tech was received from Delgado in Spring 2004. Comments and concerns from the Academic Affairs staff and external reviewers were sent to Delgado on June 29. Since then, the staff and Delgado have been involved in sustained communication to resolve remaining concerns and clarify budgetary information.

1. **Description**

The program in Veterinary Technology includes didactic and clinical education necessary for preparing students to provide animal health care. The proposed curriculum will provide theoretical and practical skills necessary for certification as Veterinary Technicians, including office, laboratory and hospital procedures, animal anesthesia and radiology, emergency techniques, exotic pet care and animal surgical nursing for large and small animals as well as office and clinic management. The program is designed for those students who possess college level literacy and computation skills, are highly motivated, and demonstrate high levels of commitment.

Ten hours of General Education courses (shown in the Semester Sequence Listing which follows) are required for admittance into the Vet Tech program. Once a student is admitted into the program, four semesters and one summer session of coursework and externships are necessary to complete requirements. Students will be admitted into the program only one semester of each academic year, thus eliminating the need for all courses to be offered each semester.

Delgado's proposed curriculum includes 900 hours of combined laboratory and externship hours. Most of the laboratory courses will require hand-on animal experience in local veterinary facilities with specific skills checklists to assess student performance.

The staff is satisfied that the proposed curriculum is consistent with requirements of the Accreditation Policies and Procedures of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Committee on Veterinary Technician Education and Activities (CVTEA). Dr. James Hurrell, the veterinarian affiliated with developing the program proposal, has incorporated the CVTEA "Essential Skills Task List" into the appropriate course objectives. The entire curriculum will be carefully reviewed by CVTEA when the self-study is received for accreditation.

Pre-Requisites for entry into program:

MATH 118	Algebra	3
ENGL 101	English Comp	3
BIOL 141	General Biology 1	3
BIOL 143	Gen BIOL Lab	1
		10

First Semester

VTEC 101	Animal Health Careers	1
VTEC 102	Vet Off Proc/Hosp Man	3
VTEC 105	Animal Anat/Phys	4
VTEC 106	An Anat/Phys Lab	1
BIOL 210	Microbiology	3
BIOL 212	Micro Lab	1
		13

Second Semester

VTEC 121	Animal Nurs Skills I	2
VTEC 125	Parmacology Vet Tech	2
VTEC 131	Surg Nurs Vet Tech	2
VTEC 135	Clinical Pathology I	3
VTEC 136	Clin Path Lab	1
SPCH 130/131	Speech	3
		13

Summer

VTEC 141	Anesthesia for Vet Tech	2
VTEC 145	Radiology for Vet Tech	2
VTEC	Clinical Internship I	2
		6

Third Semester

VTEC 205	Small Animal Medicine	3
VTEC 211	Lab Animal Medicine	2
VTEC 221	Animal Nurs Skills II	2
VTEC 227	Clinical Internship II	2
PSYC 127	General Psychology	3
		12

Fourth Semester

VTEC 235	Clinical Pathology II	2
VTEC 241	Large Animal Techniques	1
VTEC 245	Large Animal Medicine	3
VTEC 251	Vet Technology Trends	2
VTEC 257	Clinical Internship III	2
		10

Total Credits: 64

2. Need

In 2002, LCTCS institutions were approached by representatives of the veterinary who requested the development of a Vet Tech program. Letters of support from the Louisiana Veterinary Medical Association, Southeast Louisiana Veterinary Association, and numerous veterinarians and clinics in the Florida Parishes, Northshore, Baton Rouge and Greater New Orleans areas endorse the development of a Vet Tech program at Delgado and preferential hiring of its graduates. Many veterinarians in the area will indeed be "stakeholders" of the program, as 78 of the 87 who responded to the survey (90%) have indicated they would provide educational externship opportunities for students in their practices. An Affiliation Agreement has been drafted in accordance with CVTEA requirements for formal arrangements with practitioners.

In Spring 2002, a needs assessment was sent to veterinarians in the Greater New Orleans area. Respondents perceived a shortage of veterinary technologists in the area and indicated approximately 100 unfilled positions. Responses projected a median salary of $20,800 annually for graduates of an associate level program. In Fall 2003, an advisory committee was established to further investigate the need for a Vet Tech program. This committee unilaterally supported the development of an A.A.S. program at Delgado to educate veterinary technicians.

A similar program is offered at Northwestern State University (NWSU) in Natchitoches, some 275 miles from New Orleans. The NWSU Vet Tech program has averaged 11.8 completers annually over the last five years. The program director at NWSU has indicated that while few job openings are

advertised for students completing the program, the graduates frequently receive job offers before they graduate. Given the distance between Natchitoches and New Orleans as well as the demographic differences between the areas, two such programs within the state do not seem unnecessarily duplicative.

3.   Students

The proposal projects numbers of enrollees and graduates as follows:

	#Yr 1(AY 04-05)	Yr 2(AY 05-06)	Yr 3(AY 06-07)	Yr 4 (AY 07-08)	Yr 5 (AY 08-09)
New Students	20	20	25	30	30
Cont. Students		16	16	20	24
Graduates		14	14	17	21

4.   Faculty

The proposed curriculum requires many courses in the life sciences and other general education areas. As the College already offers these courses in support of other programs, Delgado will be able to utilize existing faculty resources in these areas.

The new professional courses within the curriculum would require new faculty with expertise and credentials in veterinary medicine as designated by CVTEA. Delgado predicts that 1.5 FTE new faculty will be needed to initiate the program with an additional 0.5 FTE new faculty needed in year two.

CVTEA criteria specify that:
1. associated with the program must be:
    a minimum equivalent of one full-time licensed veterinarian and
    a minimum equivalent of one full-time veterinary technician who is a graduate of an AVMA accredited program and/or is currently credentialed as a veterinary technician.
2.   The program director must be a licensed veterinarian or veterinary technician with current license or certification and that
3.   Program direction must be a full time position with sufficient time allowed for administrative and teaching responsibilities as well as opportunities and support for professional development.

A licensed, practicing veterinarian with prior association with veterinary technician training programs in another state is already affiliated with Delgado and working with proposal development.

5.   Library and Other Special Resources

Consultation with the Librarian for Collection Development/Acquisitions at Delgado resulted in an estimate of $9,000 to $10,000 would be needed for the initial purchase of appropriate journals, texts and other forms of reference materials related to veterinary technology for students. Thereafter, $1,000 is projected annually for updating/replacing reference materials.

6. Facilities and Equipment

Delgado has adequate classrooms and office space to house the Vet Tech program and has indicated that no new facilities will be required. While laboratories for existing courses will be used, other laboratory experiences will occur off-site under the supervision of a clinical coordinator.

From the proposal:

> *There is a national trend away from the use of animals at college facilities for teaching purposes. Many Vet Tech programs, including accredited distance learning programs have no animals on campus...Even the esteemed American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) has developed an accredited online distance education program for veterinary technicians without the use of animals "on campus". Use of "animal colonies" has become not only very cost prohibitive but is increasingly regulated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) through the Animal Welfare Act.*

A well-documented trend toward use of "off-site" animal facilities resulted in revised *Policies and Procedures* of the CVTEA (June 2004) which reflect the significant changes in how Vet Tech students are receiving their training. The veterinary community is increasingly involved in "hands on" training of Vet Tech students. This trend reduces the need for on-campus facilities and equipment in the community or technical college setting. The modest total of $17,000 over the first five years of program implementation is projected for Supplies, Services and Movable Equipment.

Additionally, students will be able to use some of the equipment and facilities housed on Delgado's campus for allied health programs, such as two x-ray machines.

7. Administration

The Vet Tech program will be housed in the Division of Allied Health; its director will report to the Dean of the Division. Establishment of the Vet Tech program should have no effect on the present administrative structure of the institution.

8. Accreditation

Board of Regents Policy 2.13 indicates that accreditation by the CVTEA of the AVMA is mandatory for the proposed program. The proposal sites an initial cost of $2,500 plus $3,000 for the site visit. Thereafter, an annual fee of $500 is required for maintenance of accreditation.

9.   Costs

A revised budget submitted by Delgado estimates **additional** expenses and revenues for the proposed program.

EXPENSES	Year 1 (AY 04-05)	Year 2 (AY 05-06)	Year 3 (AY 06-07)	Year 4 (AY 07-08)
Faculty (Incl ben	(1.5 FTE) $82,000	(2FTE) $102,000	(2FTE) $107,100	(2FTE) $107,100
Library	9,500	1,000	1,000	1,000
Support Serv Accred Fees	2,000	7,500	2,500	2,500
Supplies	3,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Equipment	5,000	3,000	0	0
Total	**$101,500**	**$115,500**	**$112,600**	**$112,600**

REVENUE	Year 1 (AY 04-05)	Year 2 (AY 05-06)	Year 3 (AY 06-07)	Year 4 (AY 07-08
Tuition	$ 38,100	$ 60,330	$ 75,042	$ 90,495
Lab Fee	1,800	2,700	3,360	4,050
Tech Fee	3,000	4,800	5,970	7,200
Aca Enhan Fee	3,720	5,880	7,314	8,820
Inst Realloc	54,880	41,790	20,914	2,035
Total	**$101,500**	**$15,500**	**$112,600**	**$112,600**

The institution has indicated that any difference between the projected student generated revenue and actual expenses will be paid from the College's operating budget. Additionally, the Vet Tech program will have access to Carl Perkins funding awarded to Delgado. These funds have been re-authorized for the next five years; programs in the Allied Health division receive $5,000-$50,000 annually of the institution's Carl Perkins funds.

STAFF SUMMARY

Veterinarians in the Greater New Orleans area have indicated a strong and sustained need for graduates of a two-year Vet Tech program and have requested that Delgado Community College provide such a program. These professionals will become stakeholders by agreeing to provide externship opportunities to Vet Tech students. The LSU School of Veterinary Medicine in Baton Rouge also supports the development of the Vet Tech program at Delgado. It is likely that graduating

veterinarians will be informed of the program and may well recruit Vet Tech graduates when establishing their clinics or practices. While not specifically mentioned in the proposal, the staff deems it likely that certified Vet Techs would also be desirable as employees of several research facilities with animal colonies within the state, such as the LSU and Tulane Health Science Centers in New Orleans, the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine and Delta Primate Center in Covington.

A program in veterinary technology will neither be considered easy by students nor inexpensive to operate. The projected numbers of students and graduates may be a bit optimistic; however, the program should easily meet the Board of Regents minimum requirements. While the program must become accredited by CVTEA, it will not be eligible until several classes have graduated. Maintaining an appropriate number of students will be essential to cover expenses and to be eligible for accreditation. Professional stakeholders could also become disillusioned if the number of externs and graduates do not meet projections or industry demand. Accordingly, a progress report addressing the following staff concerns should be required until CVTEA accreditation has been achieved:

1. Numbers of students, externship placements and graduates;
2. Acquisition of equipment;
3. Faculty number and credentials;
4. Adequacy of funding; and
5. Record of graduate employment.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The staff recommends that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee grant conditional approval for the A.A.S. program in Veterinary Technology at Delgado Community College, effective Spring 2005. Beginning September 1, 2005, and continuing on that date until CVTEA accreditation has been achieved, Delgado Community College shall submit to the Commissioner of Higher Education a report addressing concerns cited in the staff summary.